

DOCKET NO.: MSFT-0508 (37457.1)
Application No.: 09/235,038
Office Action Dated: June 5, 2003

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-22 were rejected. Claims 1-8, 19, 21 and 22 have been amended to further clarify the present invention. Claim 20 has been canceled. Therefore, following entry of the present response, claims 1-19, 21 and 22 will remain pending in the application.

Claims 1-8 and 19-22 stand rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particular point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. In particular, the office action suggests that the reference to a "system" in the preamble of claims 1-8 and 19-22 is indefinite because "it is not clear whether the 'system' is a computer system or a network system or a computer programming system." (*Office Action dated June 5, 2003 at p. 2*). The preamble of claims 1-8 and 19, 21 and 22 have been amended to recite that the system is a computer system. However, applicants wish to note that the amendment is not made to the exclusion of possible interpretations of a computer system, which may include a network system and/or a computer programming system, for example.

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103 (a) allegedly as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,558,413 to Schmidt *et al.* ("Schmidt") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,809,170 to Leblang *et al.* ("Leblang").

Applicant would like to thank Examiner Colbert for offering clarification of an apparent inconsistency in the office action. In particular, on page 2 through 3 of the present office action, it appears that Schmidt is suggested to both teach and not teach "a second program to check in and check out the database item, such that modification of the database item is restricted when the database item is checked out." As per applicant's discussion with Examiner Colbert, applicant's response proceeds with the assumption that Schmidt teaches

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the above. However, applicant requests clarification of the record and the opportunity to respond.

Therefore, the office action alleges that while Schmidt fails to teach a source code control (SCC) system that stores versions of a database item, combining Schmidt with Leblang obviates the present invention.

Briefly, the present invention is directed to the versioning of database items, such as text-stream stored procedures and binary streams within the database itself. The novel invention accomplishes such database versioning of database items by storing versions of the database item both in a source code control (SCC) system and in the database itself. This novel approach allows the SCC system to exercise version control over the database items, while still beneficially permitting the database to conduct normal database operations.

The following example, recited in independent claim 15, explains how the present invention accomplishes this novel technique. The invention includes a program that compares the version of the database item housed in the SCC system with the version of the database item housed in the database itself. If the version of the database item in the SCC system is identical to the version of the database item database item in the database, that version is provided to the user. If, on the other hand, the version of the database item in the SCC system is different from the version of the database item database item in the database itself, the user is given a choice to select one of the versions of the database item in the SCC system and in the database itself. The database item that is selected by the user is checked out using the program, and also is stored in the SCC system and in the database. The amendments to the claims make explicit that which previously was implicit; namely, that a

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comparison of the version of the database item in the SCC system is compared with a version of the database item in the database.

As a result, by comparing the versions of the database item in the SCC system and the database item in the database itself, and by allowing a version of the database item to be stored both in the SCC system and in the database itself, the present invention permits the database to continue to conduct normal database operation, while allowing the SCC system to exercise version control over the items in the database.

Neither Schmidt or Leblang, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest the presently claimed invention, as amended. The office action admits that Schmidt does "not teach a source code control (SCC) system to store versions of the database item." (*Office Action dated June 5, 2003 at p. 3*). The office action, however, alleges that Leblang overcomes the limited teaching of Schmidt and "discloses a source code control (SCC) system to store versions of the database item (col. 1, lines 35-40, col. 2, lines 18-26, col. 11, lines 33-42, and col. 13, lines 23-27)." (*Office Action dated June 5, 2003 at p. 3*).

The claims have been amended to recite that the present invention compares the version of the database item in the source code control (SCC) system with the version of the database item in the database, and manipulates the checked-out database item as a function of the comparison, so as to allow the database to continue to conduct normal database operation, while allowing the SCC system to exercise version control over the items in the database. Neither Schmidt nor Leblang teach comparing the versions of the database item in the SCC system and in the database.

Schmidt does not teach comparing a version of a database item with a version of the SCC system. Instead, Schmidt is directed to the versioning of standard computer programs,

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and not the versioning of items in a database. As a result, Schmidt simply describes storing versions of the standard computer programs in its SCC system. (*Schmidt* - column 4, lines 3-22). Schmidt does not also describe storing a version of a database item in another location, like a database, such that a comparison of the versions may be accomplished. This is to be expected because of the considerable differences of standard computer programs as compared to database items. Schmidt's focus on storing versions of standard computer programs eliminates any motivation to store the versions of the standard computer programs in other locations, like a database.

Similarly, Leblang does not teach comparing a version of a database item with a version of the SCC system. As with Schmidt, Leblang simply describes storing versions of the database item in its SCC system. (*Leblang* - column 10, lines 52-58). Leblang does not also describe storing a version of a database item in another location, like a database, such that a comparison of the versions of the database item may be accomplished.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-9 under 35 USC §103 (a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Schmidt in view of Leblang.

Claims 10-18 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103 (a) allegedly as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,145,119 to House *et al.* ("House") in view Schmidt. In particular, the office action suggests, *inter alia*, that House "teaches comparing a stream of the database item in the source code control (SCC) system with a stream of the database item in the database (col. 7, line 6-28)." (*Office Action dated June 5, 2003* at p. 5). Applicants respectfully disagree.

Briefly, House provides a programming development environment that supports the accessing of database software across an Internet or Intranet via Web-based networks (*House*

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— column 2, lines 49-55). House teaches a data structure that makes group development easier by allowing all elements and associations necessary to build the components of a project, such as source, objects, and executables to be located in a single file (*House* — column 2, lines 57-63). However, nowhere does House teach or suggest comparing a stream of the database item in the source code control (SCC) system with a stream of the database item in the database, as recited in the present claims. In fact, the word “compare” or “comparing” does not even appear in House at all.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 10-18 under 35 USC § 103 (a) allegedly as being unpatentable over House in view Schmidt.

Finally, claim 19 stands rejected under 35 USC § 103 (a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Leblang in view Schmidt and claims 20-22 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103 (a) allegedly as being unpatentable over Leblang in view Schmidt in further view of House.

Applicant would again like to thank Examiner Colbert for offering clarification of an apparent inconsistency in the office action. In particular, on page 2 and page 8 of the present office action, it appears that Leblang is suggested to both teach and not teach “a source code control (SCC) system to store versions of the item.” As per applicant’s discussion with Examiner Colbert, applicant’s response proceeds with the assumption that Leblang teaches the above. However, applicant requests clarification of the record and the opportunity to respond.

For the same reasons discussed above with respect to claims 1-18, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 19 under 35 USC § 103 (a) over

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Leblang in view Schmidt, and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 21 and 22 over Leblang
in view Schmidt in further view of House.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application and an early Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. In the event that the Examiner cannot allow the present application for any reason, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' attorney Vincent J. Roccia at (215-564-8946).

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